

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/955,969

Examiner

Krishnan S Menon

Applicant(s)

HAMA ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to after-final amendment of 3/4/05.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1,6-12 and 17-19; RENUMBERED 1-11.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 9/20/01 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

Election/Restrictions

Claim 1 is directed to an allowable product. Pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Official Gazette notice dated March 26, 1996 (1184 O.G. 86), claims 9-11, directed to the process of making or using the patentable product, previously withdrawn from consideration as a result of a restriction requirement, are now subject to being rejoined. Claims 9-11 are hereby rejoined and fully examined for patentability under 37 CFR 1.104.

Since all claims previously withdrawn from consideration under 37 CFR 1.142 have been rejoined, the restriction requirement made in the Office action mailed on 5/16/03 is hereby withdrawn.

Affidavit/Declaration

The report under 37 CFR 1.132 filed 3/4/05 is insufficient to overcome the rejection of claims based upon the Goettmann reference as set forth in the last Office action because: subject matter covered under the report, i.e., retention of tensile strength of the fabric on exposure to acidic cleaning solution, is not disclosed in the application or claimed, and is not commensurate in scope with the claims.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided

by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Michael Davis on 3/16/05.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

Claim 1, line 2: "including" was changed to - - consisting of a mixture of - -

Claim 12, line 3: "including" was changed to - - consisting of a mixture of - -

Claim 9: added in the second line after 'support': - - according to claim 1 - -

Claim 11: added in the second line of the second paragraph, after 'membrane support': - - according to claim 1 - -

Allowable Subject Matter

Pending Claims 1,6-12 and 17-19 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The closest prior arts are Goettmann'835, and Shinjou et al (US 4,795,559 and US 4,728,394). Goettmann teaches a non-woven fabric having main fibers and binder fibers and showing tensile strength, etc as claimed. However, the Goettmann fabric contains cellulosic fiber/pulp materials in addition to the synthetic fibers, and thus does not teach a non-woven fabric '... consisting of ... synthetic resin fine fiber' as claimed in claims 1 and 12. Shinjou references teach a laminate with layers having different fibers, and do

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not teach a single layer of mixed fibers. Remaining claims depend from claims 1 and 12 and are therefore allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Krishnan S Menon whose telephone number is 571-272-1143. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wanda L Walker can be reached on 571-272-1151. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Krishnan Menon

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Patent Examiner

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